

CITY OF GLOUCESTER
Community Development Department
Minutes of the Meeting
June 3, 2008
Harbor Room
East Main Street
Gloucester, MA 01930

Community Forum on Gloucester Harbor

Mayor Carolyn Kirk began the forum at 7:10. Forum ended at 9:10.

PUTTING THE WORKING PORT BACK TO WORK- *Mayor Carolyn Kirk* introduced herself to the audience and stated that she is hosting community forums on Gloucester Harbor in conjunction with the City's Community Development Department and the Community Panel. She thanked members of the community panel and members of the community for attending the forum. She stated that this is the second of five community forums on Gloucester Harbor. She stated that the first forum at City Hall last night had approximately two hundred fifty residents in attendance. She stated that on January 1, 2008, during her inaugural speech, she stated that she would put out for community discussion some scenarios around the harbor and its redevelopment. She stated that she wants to make sure that the community has a chance to help shape any of the types of changes that come out of the administration. She stated that Gloucester needs to change intentionally. She stated that she chose four scenarios because she felt the Harbor Plan, as a whole was too big to tackle. She stated that there has been a dedicated group of folks who have looked at the harbor plan. She stated that she wants to take the focus away from zoning and look at some visuals. She stated that are going to put some views out to the community to get the community's reaction and have residents ask: Is this what we want for Gloucester Harbor? What are the some of the values that drive decisions? What is good public policy around the harbor?

Mayor Carolyn Kirk stated that the City Council has already voted to move forward on some zoning changes within the Fort area. She stated that the City Council has been gracious enough to wait until the administration gets some public input and uses the professional staff that they have in order to shape those recommendations.

Mayor Carolyn Kirk thanked Jen Fahey, Chairman of the Planning Board, Senator Tarr, Charles Norris of the Cambridge 7 Group and Jack Wiggins of the Urban Harbor Institute for attending the meeting and introduced Sarah Buck, the Community Development Director. She stated that the community panel members are advisors to the Mayor and are an impartial jury of Gloucester peers, though they will take no vote, they have to come to consensus as to where there is consensus. She stated that consensus is very important in moving forward because there has to be consensus at the local level for anything that is tackled in the Fort area. She stated that they need consensus in terms of the harbor plan, which is governed by the State. She stated that these forums are about where the community agrees where there is consensus in the community.

COMMUNITY PANEL

- *Tom Balf*, Environmental Energy Expert
- *Doug Cook*, Landscape Design Architect
- *Phil Cusumano*, Artist
- *Robert Foley*, Former Merchant Marine
- *Rosalyn Frontiera*, Former Waterfront Family
- *Capt. Paul Frontiero*, Owner of Seven Seas Whale Watch

COMMUNITY PANEL, CON'T-

- *David Marsh*, Retired Commercial Banker
- *Scott Memhard*, Owner of Cape Pond Ice
- *Reverend Fayette Severance*, Member of the Clergy

BEGINNING THE CONVERSATION: A WALK AROUND THE HARBOR SOME VISUAL SCENARIOS FOR HARBOR DEVELOPMENT-

Sarah Buck, Community Development Director and Harbor Plan Coordinator introduced herself to the audience. She stated that the purpose tonight is to hear what residents have to say about how they relate to the harbor, what the community's vision is about the harbor and what the harbor means to the community. She stated that it is important to hear what the community has to say about the harbor and try to get the themes about what the harbor means to everyone. She stated that they have a very good harbor plan that was developed over two years ago, though it lacks agreement on what will actually move the harbor forward. The harbor is going through change and it is how they shape it and let it move forward and still keep what the community feels are the most important parts of it. She stated that she will present a PowerPoint presentation and she asked that the community understand that the presentation suggests ideas not plans for the harbor.

Ms. Buck presented a PowerPoint presentation to the community. The presentation highlighted the following ideas and/or statements:

- The harbor is only bringing back 1.5% of the tax revenue for the city.
- Gloucester has always relied on its harbor.
- Its about putting the working harbor back to work in the context of community values and policy
- Two regulatory ways of putting the working fort back to work, a draft master plan, which will have to go before the State for approval as well as City Council and the local zoning regulations, would be amended through the City Council.
- Purpose tonight is to ask people who care about the harbor to contribute to a vision and to guide decisions about its development through core principles.
- Four scenarios: The Fort, Harbor Cove, Waterfront Harbor Owners and the East Gloucester Harbor Front.
- One concept is public access in the Harbor Cove area

COMMUNITY FORUM-

Ruth Mordertai, resident of Rocky Neck appeared before the community. She stated that she is concerned about losing the atmosphere of the Fort. She stated that the city needs to look at ways that they can use the fishing industry and she is not convinced that the city needs to have 25% commercial fishing boats and 75% recreational boats. She stated that artist work well with light industry and they have been partners with fishermen for years in wanting to paint the harbor and share that kind of life.

Capt. Jeff Eagan stated that he has been in Gloucester for thirty years, running boats. He stated that his vision for Gloucester is a harbor similar to Newport, Rhode Island. He stated that Newport has docks with yachts on it and next to that there are docks with commercial fishing boats and next to that there's a dock with shops. He stated that Newport has a very good mixed-use harbor.

Joe Garland read a letter that he wrote to the Editor of the Gloucester Daily Times. Some visions in his letter were to move the freezers on Roger Street and the moving of the electric company to Blackburn Industrial Park. His letter stated that the harbor should have broadened uses but absolutely maritime orientated, well thought out and publicly approved uses that are entirely consistent with "our place".

COMMUNITY FORUM, CON'T-

Heidi Goodwin stated that she is a resident of downtown Gloucester. She stated that her father delivered newspapers to Eastern Point in the 1920's. She stated that she grew up in Gloucester walking from East Gloucester Square to Rocky Neck with her uncle and her aunt. She stated that she walks now with her own children. She stated that she walks along the Boulevard to Stage Fort Park and she points out to her children how lucky they are to live in such an incredible place. She stated that to get to Fort Square Park is not very kid-friendly or attractive. She believes the Birdseye building has potential. She is concerned that the harbor is not very clean and the community needs to be closer to harbor but also the community needs to care about taking care of the harbor and keeping it clean and healthy. She suggested that an educational facility be part of the harbor plan.

Brenda Malloy stated that she loves the architecture and character of Gloucester. She is concerned with people buying fabulous old homes and tearing them down and putting up mansions. She stated that the condominiums in Newport, Rhode Island are horrible to look at from the water.

Larry Swift of East Gloucester stated that he was very impressed with the four options given in the PowerPoint presentation. He stated that if there was some way to tie the four scenarios together it might be a useful concept. He believes that the most interesting part of the harbor is the area from the North Shore Art Association building down through the old Sibley Wharf. He stated that the Beacon Marine is the most interesting place he has ever seen and he is concerned that new development will turn Gloucester into a giant "McDonald's".

Larry Langley of Gloucester stated that he has been working in the boating industry for most of his life. He has traveled numerous places and has seen what boaters consider a welcoming harbor. He stated that Gloucester would not be considered a "friendly harbor". He stated that boaters that visit Gloucester Harbor need a place to anchor and a dinghy dock. He stated that these are suggestions that involve a small investment with a big return.

Kate Sidon, Gloucester shop owner, stated that she is concerned about the artists' future in Gloucester and I4C2 lot.

James Hand, resident of Rocky Neck, stated that he moved to Gloucester because of its beauty, its architecture and its diversity. He believes that a hotel on Pavilion Beach is a great idea but it should look like it belongs to Gloucester. He believes that mixed-use is a good idea. He is concerned with walls of big buildings blocking the views.

Fatima Heath stated that she has lived in Gloucester her entire life and comes from a fishing family. She stated that change is growth and the city should maintain public access to the waterfront.

Jack Levie, property owner on Harbor Cove, stated that he is concerned with some of the costs needed for economical success. He stated that to do one piling the cost is about \$1,200 and to put a deck on pilings, you need about a thousand pilings, which would cost approximately 1.5 million dollars. He stated that property owners need restrictions loosened so that they can have business opportunities that will allow them to pay for the docks. He stated that he is not interested in condominiums.

Mike Parisi, owner of Three Lanterns, stated that he is one of the waterfront property owners. He stated that the working waterfront is not working. He stated that there used to be several fishing supply stores in Gloucester and they are all gone due to what has happened to the fishing industry. He stated that service industries cannot survive on the waterfront so they are looking for things to do. He stated that he is not interested in seeing condominiums on the waterfront, but he is interested in seeing room for more boats, both commercial and recreational.

COMMUNITY FORUM, CON'T-

Bob Gillis, stated that he has been privileged to work with a group of waterfront property owners and the Chamber of Commerce in order to work on a plan for the waterfront. He stated that they have been working for the last couple of years on a plan to revitalize the working waterfront and stimulate the economy of the city. He stated that most of the work on the plan was done by Jack Wiggins and the Harbor Plan Implementation Committee. He stated that the group he has been working with is not interested in putting residential development on the waterfront. The changes that they believe will aid and complement a thriving fishing industry are flexibility and mixed-use of the waterfront. He stated that they propose that 25% of any new dockage would be dedicated to the use of commercial fishing vessels.

Mary Brown, Gloucester resident of thirty-five years, stated that she has two children, a twenty-seven year old artist and a twenty-four year old lobsterman. She wants her children to stay in Gloucester. She believes the public access to waterfront; the walkways on the harbor and developing Stage Fort to Rocky Neck would be fabulous.

Bill Hayes, Gloucester resident of fifty years, stated that he is a former fisherman, real estate developer and a former developer for I4C2. He stated that he spoke last night at City Hall about the perils of being a waterfront developer. He stated that throughout his development career he has been subjected to very tight architectural control. He stated that there should be tight architectural control and if the structure is not built to the specifications that were submitted then an occupancy permit should not be granted.

Carolyn O'Connor, resident of Rocky Neck, stated that she has lived on Rocky Neck since 1967. She stated that she is concerned with all the little nodes that are very important historical sites, such as the first landing areas in Gloucester, that have been there since the 1600's. Another area where she would like to see preserved is the place where the first schooner was launched in the Harbor Cove area.

Peggy O'Malley, a resident of downtown Gloucester, stated that she wants the community to think about things that will sustain the city between the months of November to April. She stated that they need to think about how to make the harbor sustainable and vibrant all year long. She stated that innovative research is a great vision for the harbor. She stated that it would be great to knit together Main Street and Rogers Street.

Mike Diliberti, long time Gloucester resident, stated that he loves the idea of a marine industrial park where Americold is. He also likes the idea of jumpstarting the city by adding a dinghy dock in the I4C2 area. He would like to see a park for artists to come and paint in Gloucester.

Richard Rosenfeld, resident of Rocky Neck, stated that the community should focus very clearly on the area immediately adjoining downtown, the area of Harbor Cove. He stated that redeveloping Harbor Cove will not only effect that portion of the waterfront, but all of downtown Gloucester development. He believes that the city should make the area attractive to companies, employees, executives and families that want to come here, not just tourists. He believes in restoring public access and that the focus should be on Harbor Cove.

Susanne Altenburger, resident of Gloucester, stated that since 1978 Gloucester has been designated as a marine industrial port. She stated that the State is interested in preserving the last few places where you can do fishing, where you can dock fishing vessels, where you can take out cruise ships, where you can do servicing of L & G platforms and where you can do marine and industrial trade. She stated that the State allows every property owner on the waterfront a long list of options as to what they can do with their property, as long as it is subject to certain key provisions as outlined. She stated that the harbor front property owners refer to themselves as a uniform group but it is by no means a unified group, there are quite a few property owners that are doing well following Massachusetts's law. She stated that membership in the marine industrial park is voluntary and if people have no luck making money they should consider selling or finding another way to make money.

COMMUNITY FORUM, CON'T-

Philip Bolger, Gloucester resident of eighty years, stated that he has seen a lot of ups and downs in the harbor and has seen various attempts to try to change parts of it, not all of which have worked out very well. He stated that the fishing industry is going to come back. He suggested that the city not water down the harbor front.

Helen Garland stated that many people last night at City Hall were excited about opening the harbor for school children to learn the arts of sailing and to have real access to the water. She stated that it is disgusting that the fishermen have been painted as murderers of the sea. She stated that she agrees with the things that Mr. Bolger is doing to bring back the fishing industry in Gloucester.

Patty Paige, Administrator for the High School Sailing Team in Gloucester, stated that they are in their third year of operation. She stated that they have Gloucester and Rockport students involved in the program. She stated that 95% of students in the sailing program go on to colleges that also offer sailing. She stated that the benefit of this is that students learn sailing and learn respect and proper use of the harbor. She stated that this program can lead to community boating. She would like the City to consider that the program needs a home facility with storage and bathroom facilities.

Joanne Castano, one of the founders for the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, which is an initiative to create a viable atmosphere for artist to live and work in Gloucester, appeared before the community. She stated that she has lived in Gloucester for about twenty-five years. She stated that there are more artists in Gloucester than all of the North Shore. She stated that the artists work very closely with the fishing industry. She stated that there is a cultural vitality within the community.

Marcia Hart stated that she is in support of the draft harbor plan. She stated that one disagreement that she has is that the Paint Factory should remain a marine industrial zone, especially because there is a compatible use for it with Ocean Alliance. She stated that Gloucester is rich in the kind of riches that can be sustained such as resources, history, beauty and people. She stated that her vision of the harbor is one that has fishing boats. She is in support of the marine-industrial port zone being maintained and the designated port being maintained and that the fishing industry be strengthened in every possible way. She stated that if there is going to be more recreational boating in the inner harbor then the city should find a way to be the direct benefactor of the money generated from that revenue stream. She likes the idea of more moorings and a shuttle service into shore. She likes the idea for slips for tall ships. She stated that Gloucester needs to solve its parking problem.

Kate Banks, long distance sailor, stated that she spoke last night about not being in favor of recreational marinas in the designated port area. She stated that she is also in favor of having a harbor that is welcoming to cruising yachtsmen, by adding dinghy dockage and transient dockage. She stated that she is a fan of DPA and urged the community to read the local and federal regulations found online.

Joe Ciaramitaro, co-owner of Captain Joe and Sons, stated that he wants the community to concentrate on how the work on the waterfront gets financed. He stated that the waterfront property owners have discussed different possibilities and the property owners want to sell lobster and they want to be able to tie up fishing boats. He stated that the fish that used to go through local businesses now go through the auction at the State Fish Pier. He stated that they do not want to push fishing boats out, they want to make sure they have safe, well-lit places to tie up, but they need to make money on the upper portions of their properties. He stated no one is going to be able to finance to build a two million dollar marina to tie up commercial boats for two hundred dollars. He stated that property owners want to be able to maintain what they have for commercial fishing, but they need a way to finance it.

Sarah Buck, Community Development Director, thanked the community for attending the forum. She stated that they are moving rapidly and pointed out that attached to the forum's agenda is a schedule that informs residents what the next steps are and when the local zoning and the draft harbor plan are going to City Council for public hearing. She stated that mixing all of the community voices together will help the city to come up with a better plan.

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Respectfully submitted,

Bobbi Orlando